IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for manipulating and dispensing multiple filaments that collect a small portion of a sample via contact with the sample, the device comprising:

at least three plates each having a plurality of machined holes of a predetermined diameter dimensioned to accept a filament, wherein the at least three plates are configured to adjustably align to one another, and at least one of the at least three plates may be shifted in a horizontal direction with regard to the remaining plates to secure the multiple filaments in the device, and wherein at least one of the three plates ~~having~~ contains holes ~~having~~ that have a chamfered surface at a top or bottom thereof; and

a holding mechanism configured to orient and support the at least three plates,[[; and]]

wherein said device is ~~a manipulating mechanism~~ configured to manipulate the secured multiple filaments to:

~~permit~~ establish contact by the secured multiple filaments with samples of an analytical application ~~thereby~~ by drawing samples into the secured multiple filaments or adhering the samples to the secured multiple filaments;

position the secured multiple filaments in or out of analytical instruments or fluid supplies; [[or]] and

dispense the secured multiple filaments into a secondary holder or apparatus.

2. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1, wherein each machined hole is configured to permit unrestricted passage of a filament in a vertical direction.

3. (Currently Amended) The device of claim [[2]] 1, wherein the multiple filaments [[are]] comprise capillary tubes.

4. (Currently Amended) The device of claim [[2]] 1, wherein the multiple filaments [[are]] comprise optical fibers.

5. (Currently Amended) The device of claim [[2]] 1, wherein the multiple filaments [[are]] comprise light guiding capillary tubing.

6. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1, wherein a plate pattern of the at least three plates corresponds to one of a 96, 384 and 1536 well plate design pattern.

7. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the holding mechanism comprises:

at least one tension device configured to actuate at least one of the at least three plates into one of a locked and unlocked position; and

holder means configured to secure the at least three plates into the device.

8. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 7, wherein the at least one tension device is adjustable.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Withdrawn) A method for manipulating and dispensing filaments, comprising:

loading a plurality of filaments in machined holes of a device having at least three plates;

shifting at least one of the at least three plates in a horizontal direction with respect to the remaining plates to secure the plurality of filaments into the device; and

manipulating the plurality of filaments to:

permit contact by the plurality of filaments with samples of an analytical application thereby drawing the samples into the plurality of filaments or adhering the samples to the plurality of filaments;

position the plurality of filaments in or out of analytical instruments or fluid supplies; or

dispense the plurality of filaments into a secondary holder or apparatus.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, further comprising:

analyzing the samples of the analytical application; and

unloading the plurality of filaments from the device.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein analyzing the samples includes at least one of transferring and dispensing the samples of the analytical application from the filament.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11, wherein unloading the plurality of filaments includes shifting at least one plate in a horizontal direction with respect to the remaining plates to release the plurality of filaments from the device.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein unloading the plurality of filaments further includes one of disposing of the plurality of filaments and cleaning the plurality of filaments for re-use.

15. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein said device is further configured to unload the multiple filaments by shifting at least one of the at least three plates in a horizontal direction with regard to the remaining plates to release the multiple filaments.

16. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein said device is further configured to transfer said drawn or adhered samples via said multiple filaments by filling and then dispensing.

17. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein the multiple filaments comprise glass or polymeric rods.

18. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein the multiple filaments comprise pipette tips.

19. (New) The device of claim 1, wherein the multiple filaments comprise wires.